

BY PAUL HARVEY

AMA, THIS IS NOT YOUR FIGHT

American Medical Association, please say it isn't so. Up to now, you've made a diligent and mostly successful effort to encourage and demonstrate self-discipline. Don't get careless now.

The respected Humane Society of the United States, citing internal documents within the AMA, reports that your organization is now being solicited by the fur industry.

The fur industry's desperation is understandable. The residents of Aspen, Colorado, are going to vote February 13; they may become the first city to ban completely the sale of furs. [Ed. note: this ban was voted down.]

The voluntary boycott of furs by those opposed has already diminished the fur business; has put some furriers altogether out of business.

The imminent vote, which could make such a ban mandatory, has fur-industry people closing ranks, pooling resources, enlisting allies.

Ornamental furs have been a \$2 billion business. Much is at stake.

Amazingly, animal-rights activists are only marginally responsible for the sudden panic in the fur industry.

Humane-itarians have always opposed fur for fun.

But there is a brand-new battalion in the Fur War's army—a segment of protesters which has surprised even veteran animal lovers.

In January, radio commentator Paul Harvey brought the subject of fur to his listeners nationwide. Mr. Harvey, an HSUS James Herriot award winner, kindly consented to share these thoughts with HSUS members.



These new reinforcements are not the product of the humane community, are not even likely to contribute money to an "animal cause."

These are red-meat eaters and wearers of by-product leather.

These newcomer protesters remained largely unimpressed by all traditional animal-activist arguments—until this one.

To wear fur is to make that animal give up its life, often in pain, exclusively to adorn oneself.

And that, these new converts to the cause conclude, is obscene.

If fur as shelter from the elements was ever an excuse to strip a living creature of its skin, modern thermodynamic fabrics have eliminated that, even for Eskimos.

And thus has emerged a new

and very large group of people opposed to fur coats. They are not crusading, not throwing paint, not picketing—but they are wielding the most devastating weapon of all:

They are not buying furs.

Understand, these are mostly people utterly in favor of responsible medical research.

At least until now.

Now arises the allegation that the AMA is contemplating defending fur.

AMA, this is not your fight!

While it is entirely understandable that the AMA does not want all animal research outlawed...

Unless these two crusades are kept separate, some of the medical profession's best friends may be forced to take sides *on the other side*.

Any alliance between the AMA and the fur industry inevitably would leave the impression that killing animals for medical research and killing animals exclusively for adornment are somehow comparable.

If that premise prevails, these alternatives remain: either killing animals for fur is as important as killing them for medicine or killing animals for medicine is as frivolous as killing them for fur. ■

This commentary originally was broadcast as part of Paul Harvey News, heard on radio stations nationwide, and is reprinted with permission.